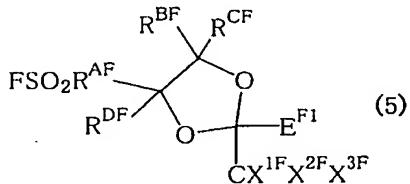
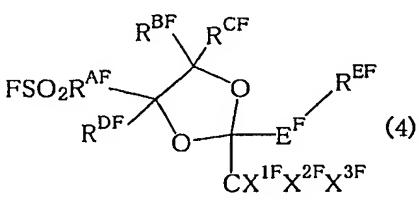
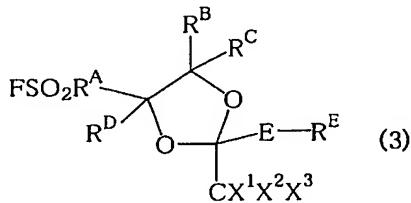


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Withdrawn): A process for producing the following fluorosulfonyl group-containing compound (5), characterized in that the following compound (3) is fluorinated to form the following compound (4), and then, the compound (4) is subjected to a decomposition reaction:



provided that the symbols in the formulae have the following meanings:

[[A]] at least one selected from R^A to R^E, X¹ to X³ and E is a hydrogen atom or a group having hydrogen atom(s), and at least one selected from R^{AF} to R^{EF}, X^{1F} to X^{3F} and E^F is a fluorinated group or a fluorine atom;

R^A: a bivalent organic group;

R^{AF}: a group corresponding to R^A, i.e. a bivalent organic group having R^A fluorinated, or the same bivalent organic group as R^A;

R^B, R^C, R^D: each independently being a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom or a monovalent organic group;

R^{BF}, R^{CF}, R^{DF}: R^{BF}, R^{CF} and R^{DF} are groups which correspond to R^B, R^C and R^D, respectively; when any one of R^B to R^D is a hydrogen atom, the one of R^{BF} to R^{DF} corresponding to the hydrogen atom is a hydrogen atom or a fluorine atom; when any one of

R^B to R^D is a halogen atom, the one of R^{BF} to R^{DF} corresponding to the halogen atom is a halogen atom; when any one of R^B to R^D is a monovalent organic group, the one of R^{BF} to R^{DF} corresponding to the monovalent organic group is a monovalent organic group having the corresponding one of R^B to R^D fluorinated, or the same group as the corresponding one of R^B to R^D ;

R^E : a monovalent organic group;

R^{EF} : a group corresponding to R^E , i.e. a monovalent organic group having R^E fluorinated, or the same monovalent organic group as R^E ;

E : a bivalent connecting group;

E^F : a group corresponding to E , i.e. the same bivalent connecting group as E , or a bivalent connecting group having E fluorinated;

E^{F1} : a group formed by scission of E^F ;

X^1, X^2, X^3 : each independently being a hydrogen atom, a chlorine atom, or a fluorine atom;

X^{1F}, X^{2F}, X^{3F} : X^{1F}, X^{2F} and X^{3F} correspond to X^1, X^2, X^3 , respectively; when any one of X^1 to X^3 is a hydrogen atom, the one of X^{1F} to X^{3F} corresponding to the hydrogen atom, is a hydrogen atom or a fluorine atom; when any one of X^1 to X^3 is a fluorine atom, the one of X^{1F} to X^{3F} corresponding to the fluorine atom, is a fluorine atom; and when any one of X^1 to X^3 is a chlorine atom, the one of X^{1F} to X^{3F} corresponding to the chlorine atom, is a chlorine atom.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the fluorination reaction is carried out by the reaction with fluorine in a liquid phase.

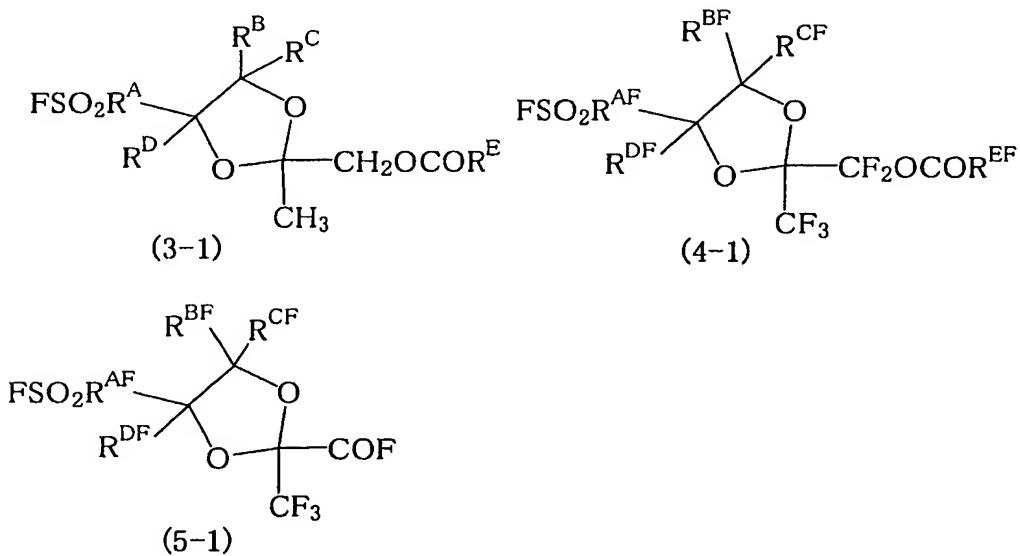
Claim 3 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 2, wherein the fluorine content of the compound (3) is from 20 to 86 mass%.

Claim 4 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 2, wherein the molecular weight of the compound (3) is from 200 to 1,000.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 1, wherein R^E is a perfluorinated monovalent organic group, and R^{EF} is the same group as R^E .

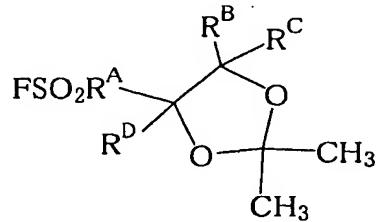
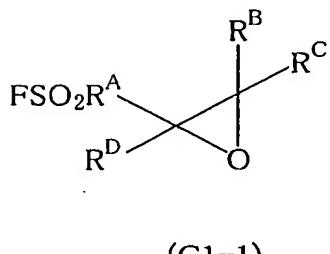
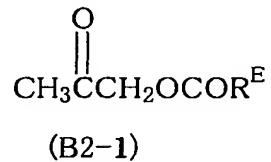
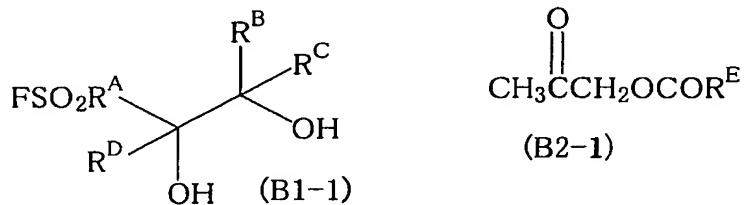
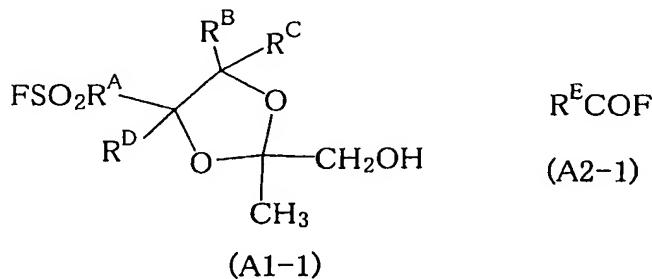
Claim 6 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the fluorination is a reaction whereby the compound (3) is substantially perfluorinated.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 1, wherein the compound (3) is the following compound (3-1), the compound (4) is the following compound (4-1), and the compound (5) is the following compound (5-1):



provided that the symbols in the formulae have the same meanings as defined above.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 7, wherein the compound (3-1) is a reaction product of the following compound (A1-1) and the following compound (A2-1), a reaction product of the following compound (B1-1) and the following compound (B2-1), or a reaction product obtained by reacting the following compound (C1-1) with acetone to form the following compound (C1-2) and reacting the compound (C1-2) and the following compound (B2-1):

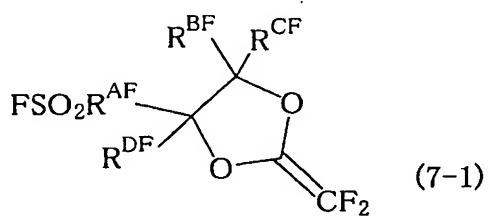
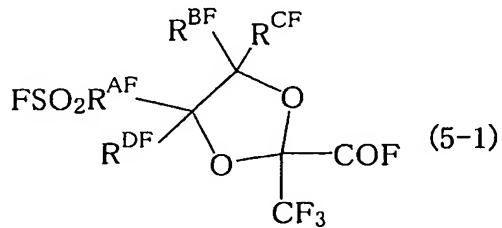


provided that the symbols in the formulae have the same meanings as defined above.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): The process according to Claim 8, wherein the compound (3-1) is a compound obtained by reacting the compound (C1-1) with acetone to obtain a reaction

product containing the compound (C1-2) and acetone, and using the reaction product as it contains the acetone, for the reaction with the compound (B2-1).

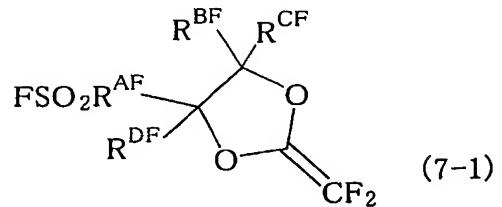
Claim 10 (Withdrawn): A process for producing the following compound (7-1), characterized in that the following compound (5-1) is thermally decomposed:



provided that the symbols in the formulae have the same meanings as defined above.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A process for producing a fluorosulfonyl group-containing polymer, characterized by comprising:

polymerizing at least one member of the following compound (7-1), or
polymerizing at least one member of the following compound (7-1) and at least one
member of a polymerizable monomer which is copolymerizable with the compound (7-1):



wherein:

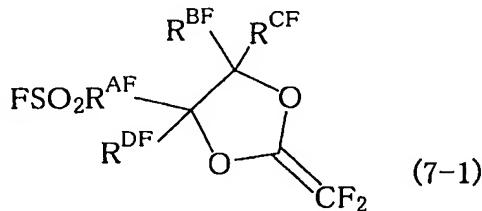
R^{AF} is a bivalent organic group

R^{BF}, R^{CF} and R^{DF} are, independently, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom or a monovalent organic group.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): A fluorosulfonyl group-containing polymer, comprising:

polymerized monomer units having polymerized of at least one member of the following compound (7-1), or

polymerized monomer units having polymerized of at least one member of the following compound (7-1) and monomer units having polymerized of at least one member of a polymerizable monomer which is copolymerizable with the compound (7-1), wherein compound (7-1) is:



wherein:

R^{AF} is a bivalent organic group

R^{BF}, R^{CF} and R^{DF} are, independently, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom or a monovalent organic group.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The fluorosulfonyl group-containing polymer according to Claim 12, which has an average molecular weight of from 5×10^3 to 5×10^6 and contains from 0.1 to 99.9 mol% of the monomer units having polymerized at least one member of a polymerizable monomer which is copolymerizable with the compound (7-1).

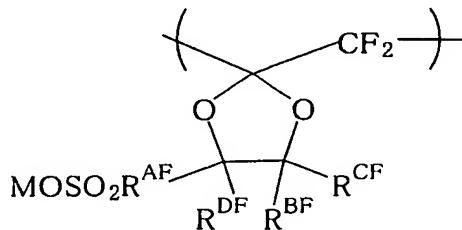
Claim 14 (Currently Amended): A process for producing a sulfonate or sulfonic group-containing polymer, comprising:

characterized in that

subjecting to alkali hydrolysis fluorosulfonyl groups of the fluorosulfonyl group-containing polymer produced by the process of Claim 11,
~~are subjected to alkali hydrolysis, or to such alkali hydrolysis,~~
optionally followed by acid treatment.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): A fluorosulfonic group-containing polymer comprising:

monomer units represented by the following formula, or
such monomer units and monomer units of another monomer which is copolymerizable with such monomer units:



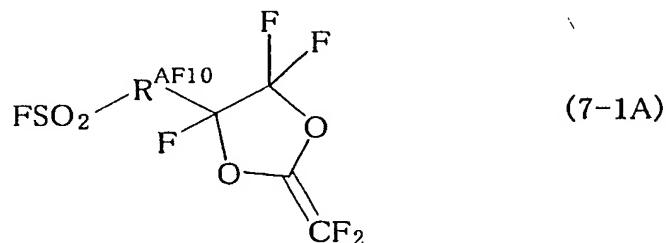
wherein M is a hydrogen atom or a counter ion, wherein

R^AF is a bivalent organic group

R^{BF} , R^{CF} and R^{DF} are, independently, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom or a monovalent organic group.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The fluorosulfonic group-containing polymer according to Claim 15, which has an average molecular weight of from 5×10^3 to 5×10^6 and contains from 0.1 to 99.9 mol% of the monomer units of another copolymerizable monomer.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): A compound represented by the following formula (7-1A):



wherein R^{AF10} is a C_{1-20} perfluoroalkylene group or a C_{1-20} perfluoro(etheric oxygen atom-containing alkylene) group.

Claim 18 (Withdrawn): Any one of the compounds represented by the following formulae, wherein M^2 is an alkali metal ion:

